

Edward Washington House
Belmont Bay, Fairfax County
Colchester Vicinity
Virginia

HABS No. VA-578

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Washington 25, D. C.

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Present Owner: B. Sherwood Hedrick

Present Use: Unoccupied

Date of Erection: Probably built by Catesby Cocke, about 1730

Number of Stories: One-and-a-half stories. The brick building remaining may have been a dependency.

Description: Foundation is practically all-header with Flemish bond above, original painting in NE. end. Plan consists of one room with stairhall. Openings have undergone many alterations.

Architectural Notes: At Belmont Bay stands what is left of the home of two successive Edward Washingtons. It is doubtless one of the oldest structures in Fairfax County. Reportedly the original houses contained five rooms with cellar and is believed to have been built by Catesby Cocke about 1730 when the first Prince William Courthouse was established on the Occoquan. Cocke served as clerk for Stafford, Prince William counties until 1746.

About 1866, Belmont was acquired by the Haislips and their family annals record how most of the early home was torn down and replaced by a comfortable frame building.

When we visited the site early this year, this latter building had been bulldozed into a pile of wreckage consisting of part stone foundation walls, large oak timbers that had been mortised and tenoned, and piles of hand-rived laths with hand-wrought nails. This evidence suggests that many elements from the original building had been salvaged in the nineteenth century reconstruction.

Historical Notes: The origins of this branch of the Washington family have long been a puzzle. Lund Washington, the General's cousin, stated that "Edward Washington lived a few miles from Colchester when I first went there to live in 1786. My uncle Lawrence and I believed him to be a relative from his strong resemblance to the Family." Recent genealogical research conducted by Miss Cordelia Jackson (Edward Washington and His Kin, Washington, D. C., 1934), establishes the fact he was not related to George Washington's or Lund Washington's clan, but descended from a family of Irish Protestants. The first American ancestor of Edward emigrated to Westmoreland County before 1675 and resided there until his death early in the eighteenth century. His son, the second Edward Washington moved to Prince William (later Fairfax) before 1737, in 1742 purchasing Belmont from Catesby Cocke. He was a trustee of the town of Colchester and a member of Pohick Church. He died at an advanced age in 1792, leaving considerable property which was devised to his son, Edward (1745-1813).

Reference: Charles W. Stetson, Washington and His Neighbors, Richmond, 1956, pp. 190-91.

Prepared by: Worth Bailey and Russell Jones, HABS National Park Service,
November, 1959

Approved: _____

Orick Sutor

Chief Architect

Date 11/18/59